



# **The History of Bolton in Bradford-Dale**

WITH NOTES ON

**Bradford**

**Eccleshill**

**Idle**

**Undercliffe**

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## PREFACE.

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In March, 1924, the teacher and scholars of the Senior Boys' Class, at Bolton St. James' Sunday School, conceived the idea of producing a comprehensive history of Bolton in Bradford-Dale, and the adjacent districts.

During the initial stages the boys worked most assiduously, some of them showing marked ability in the collection of statistics, the drawing of maps, and in the gathering of flora; a few devoting the whole of their summer holiday to these tasks. This material was carefully examined and verified, and it has been possible to embody most of it (including the maps, the flora, and the sections on Eccleshill, Undercliffe, and Idle) in this book.

It became apparent however that if the work was to be an original and a standard one, much research amongst ancient documents and other historical data would be necessary. At this point the compilation passed beyond the scope of boys, and was undertaken by those of riper knowledge and experience.

So far as the township of Bolton is concerned, every possible source of information has been thoroughly examined, and as a history of that township the publication is reliable and full.

The accounts of Eccleshill, Undercliffe, and Idle, are “*multum in parvo*,” but they nevertheless form valuable and authentic contributions.

In the collection of materials for the work, the editor on behalf of the authors concerned, expresses his sincere thanks to very many friends for assistance rendered in various ways. To all parishioners, who by their long residence and intimate knowledge of the district, have been most helpful. Among others he desires to especially name and thank are:—J. Gordon Atkinson-Jowett, Esq.; The Rev. W. A. Baker-Beal, M.A.; A. T. Parkinson, Esq., J.P.; Mr. J. Stead; Mr. A. B. Emmerson; Mr. George Anderson; Messrs. Vint, Hill and Killick, Solicitors, Bradford; Messrs. Spencer, Clarkson & Co., Solicitors, Keighley; Messrs. W. H. Brocklehurst & Co.; The Keeper of Manuscripts, British Museum; The Ministry of Agri-

culture and Fisheries; The Registrar General; Mr. W. H. Barraclough, Chief Librarian, and his staff at the Bradford Central Reference Library; Mr. W. E. Preston, Director of Art Galleries and Museums, and his staff at Bolling Hall; N. L. Fleming, Esq., Town Clerk; F. Marsden, Esq., City Engineer; R. H. Wilkinson, Esq., Tramways Manager; and to Mr. John Lottey and Mr. Thomas Wood for some of the beautiful photographs reproduced herein.

Our thanks are also eminently due, and are freely given, to all those Subscribers who have made the publication of this work possible.

ROBERT C. ALLAN,

Editor.



vi.

## CONTENTS.

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	Page
INTRODUCTION ... ..	viii.
<i>Rev. Canon A. P. Gower-Rees, M.A., M.C.</i>	
FOREWORD ... ..	xii.
<i>The Lord Bishop of Bradford (Dr. Perowne)</i>	
I. THE MANOR OF BOLTON ... ..	13
<i>Robert C. Allan.</i>	
II. WANDERINGS IN BOLTON ... ..	121
<i>Robert C. Allan.</i>	
III. THE GEOLOGY OF BOLTON ... ..	175
<i>Edward Hepworth, M.Sc.</i>	
IV. THE FLORA OF BOLTON ... ..	195
<i>Edited by Edward Hepworth, M.Sc.</i>	
V. THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH IN BOLTON ... ..	199
<i>Rev. Canon A. P. Gower-Rees, M.A., M.C.</i>	
VI. THE GROWTH OF METHODISM IN BOLTON ... ..	250
<i>W. Arthur Wilman.</i>	
VII. ECCLESHILL AND UNDERCLIFFE ... ..	269
<i>C. Arthur Sugden.</i>	
VIII. IDLE IN ANCIENT TIMES ... ..	287
<i>Herbert E. Pycroft.</i>	

## ILLUSTRATIONS

	Page
Bolton ... ..	17
Bolton Old Hall ... ..	29
Sketch Map of the Parish of Bolton ... .. facing page	36
Bradford Coat-of-Arms ... ..	59
Rural Bolton ... ..	71
Parish Church Steeple hung with Wool-Packs ... ..	75
A Comprehensive View of Bradford, 1835 ... ..	87
Public School, Idle Road, built 1822 ... ..	125
Wesleyan School, Idle Road, built 1872 ... ..	125
The Pendragon Estate, Bolton ... ..	127
Pendragon Castle or Bolton Town Hall ... ..	131
Rose Cottage ... ..	141
Seventeenth Century Cottages, Low Fold ... ..	145
Walnut Farm, Bolton Lane ... ..	149
Hodgson Fold ... ..	159
A Bit of Old Bolton ... ..	163
The Hamlet of Bolton Outlanes ... ..	169
The Hall of Pleas ... ..	171
Geological Time Chart ... ..	177
St. James' Church, Bolton, 1877 ... ..	201
Interior of St. James' Church, Bolton ... ..	219
Rev. C. H. King, A.K.C., first Vicar of Bolton ... ..	225
St. Lawrence Mission Church, Bolton Woods ... ..	229
Rev. Canon A. P. Gower-Rees, M.A., M.C. ... ..	233
The Lord Bishop of Bradford (Dr. Perowne) ... ..	239
New Vestry, St. James' Church, Bolton ... ..	243
Old Dungeon Door and Buttressed Chimney, Ivy Hall, Bolton	253
Old James Atkinson ... ..	259
First Methodist Chapel in Bolton ... ..	261
New Wesleyan Church and Sunday School ... ..	265
Old Wesleyan Chapel, Eccleshill ... ..	277
Eccleshill Stoneware ... ..	283
Manor of Idle, 1584 ... ..	293

INTRODUCTION.

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This History of Bolton in Bradford-Dale though published in connection with the 50th Anniversary of the Parish of St. James', Bolton, is designed to find a permanent place in the list of local histories. Its plan and contents imply a more ambitious purpose than that of a mere souvenir. So many people appear to know so little about their own locality. "Their eyes are in the ends of the earth," so they miss the inexhaustible store of information waiting investigation and interpretation in the vicinity of their own homes. "Familiarity breeds contempt," but contempt is not thereby justified. In this volume readers who reside in or near the parish of Bolton will be astonished to discover how little they knew, and how much there is to know about the neighbourhood. Every locality has its own version of a tale to tell concerning the great adventure of mankind, however little it may possess of antiquities,

from the study and classification of which, the archæologist may deduce knowledge, which the historian can weave into a story of fascinating interest. The volume of information gleaned, and compressed in the historical account of the Manor of Bolton, from Saxon to Modern times enshrines historical data of far-reaching significance, which is of more than local range. Local history does not begin and end in itself, and if isolated and detached it is too impoverished to be of much interest. In these days of rapid development it is inevitable, that localities in close proximity to large industrial towns, must sooner or later undergo a transformation, which will obliterate, disfigure, or crowd out of sight some of the distinctive features which have marked them for centuries. Bolton is such a locality; and the process of transformation has begun. The immediate and future value of the diary notes of Wanderings in Bolton, *Section Two*, will therefore be fully appreciated. Religion permeates all history, and without religion, history would well nigh be meaningless. The religious activities of the community are recorded in simple narratives, which will



interest all who acknowledge Christianity to be the truest philosophy of life and the best prescription for right living. In *Section Three* the amazing physical story of the earth is told in a scholarly treatise of the geology of Bolton. The records of that story are deposited in the rocky archives of the local hills, and in the very design of the valleys. The reader will experience an emotional relief when passing, even in imagination, from the scenes of titanic convulsions and cataclysmal devastations to the tranquility of the fields. The state of the flora of Bolton prior to its transition from a rural to a suburban area cannot fail to interest lovers of nature, and with the aid of the valuable record in *Section Four*, readers will be encouraged to make further investigation.

The short but interesting historical notes of neighbouring localities will be welcomed by many readers, and it is in deference to their wishes that the editor has ventured to append them to a history of Bolton.

The photographs, maps, and drawings greatly enhance the value of this publication,

for what is now recorded by the camera will soon be beyond its reach.

It is a high privilege to be associated with the vision and effort, of which this book is a result, and the indefatigable labours of the Editor will claim the gratitude of all readers.

A. P. GOWER-REES,

Vicar of Bolton.

## FOREWORD.

BY THE LORD BISHOP OF BRADFORD.  

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There are few parishes in England, even those which like Bolton are but 50 years old ecclesiastically, that cannot afford material to the enthusiastic historian for a fascinating narrative. The "History of Bolton in Bradford-Dale" will certainly prove the truth of this, for the Editor has not hesitated to go outside the strict limits of a typical parochial story, and has shown us how to weave into his record a great amount of material which if not strictly relevant to the evolution of Bolton as a separate entity is of real interest to those who like to think of Bolton as a part of the life and history of England.

It is because of this broader outlook as well as by reason of its more strictly ecclesiastical value that I have much pleasure in giving my hearty commendation to the book.

ARTHUR BRADFORD.